

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

This Amendment is being filed in response to the Office Action dated September 12, 2008. Reconsideration and allowance of the application in view of the amendments made above and the remarks to follow are respectfully requested.

Claims 1-9 are pending in the Application.

Applicant gratefully acknowledges the Examiner's reconsideration of the restriction requirement and maintaining claims 1-6 of elected Group I and claims 7-9 of non-elected Group II in the current application. In view of the finality of the restriction requirement, claims 10-12 of non-elected Group III are canceled without prejudice. Applicant reserves the right to reintroduce subject matter deleted herein at a later time during the prosecution of this application, if warranted, or in continuing applications.

Applicant thanks the Examiner for acknowledging receipt of certified copies of priority documents, as well as consideration of the information disclosure statement. Applicant especially thanks the Examiner for noting the typographical error with regard to U.S. Patent "3,938,259" as listed in the IDS, but which was intended to

be listed as U.S. Patent "3,938,250", and consideration by the Examiner of both U.S. Patent references.

By means of the present amendment, the current Abstract has been deleted and substituted with the enclosed New Abstract which better conforms to U.S. practice, such as by deleting reference numerals typically used in European practice, but which are not required in U.S. practice.

In the Office Action, the disclosure is objected to for informalities stated on page 5 of the Office Action, which include the specification (i) making direct reference to specific claims and (ii) lacking section headings. In response, the specification is amended to remove direct reference to claim numbers and replace such references, where appropriate, with language of the corresponding claims as originally filed. With regard to the specification objection based on lack of section headings, although Applicant gratefully acknowledges the suggestion, Applicant respectfully declines to add the section headings as they are not required in accordance with MPEP §608.01(a) and may be inappropriately utilized in interpreting the claims. Accordingly, withdrawal of the objection to the specification is respectfully requested.

In the Office Action, the drawings are objected to for including a reference character "f" (shown in FIG. 2) that is not mentioned in the description. In response, the specification is amended to include reference character "f".

The drawings are also objected to for allegedly not showing every feature of the invention specified in the claims, namely, the blade thickness at the bending point being larger than the non-bending area blade thickness, as recited in claim 3. Applicant respectfully traverses this objection. FIG. 2 does, in fact, illustrate that the thickness of the razor blank material in the bending zone 9 is thicker than the thickness of the blade material "a". In particular, in the bending zone 9 shown in FIG. 2, the thickness of the blank material from the inner bending point to a point on the center of the curved outer surface of the bending zone 9 is greater than thickness "a". Moreover, in view of the disclosure in the present application, for example as described on page 6, lines 18-26 and page 7, lines 3-6, the convex outer surface of the razor blank in the bending zone 9 as depicted in FIG. 2 is clearly illustrative of the bending zone having a larger thickness than the blade material thickness "a". Accordingly, it is

respectfully requested that the objections to the drawings be withdrawn.

In the Office Action, claims 4-6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as allegedly indefinite. Without agreeing with the position taken in the Office Action, and in the interest of advancing prosecution, claims 4 and 5, which depend from claim 1, have been amended to recite, in relevant part, a razor head comprising at least two razor blades, wherein each of the at least two razor blades is a razor blade as claimed in claim 1, and claim 6 has been amended to recite, in relevant part, a razor head comprising four razor blades, wherein each of the four razor blades is a razor blade as claimed in claim 1 ... Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that claims 4-6 are definite and withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, is respectfully requested.

In the Office Action, claims 1-5 are rejected as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 4,302,876 to Emmett ("Emmett") in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,860,452 to Guarnaccia ("Guarnaccia"). Claim 6 is rejected as being unpatentable over Emmett in view of Guarnaccia and further in view of SNL ("Saturday Night Live Episode") or U.S. Patent No. 1,920,711 to Pelizzola ("Pelizzola").

Claims 7 and 9 are rejected as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 3,489,589 to Nissen ("Nissen") in view of Emmett and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 972,436 to Clark ("Clark"). Claim 8 is rejected as being unpatentable over Nissen in view of Emmett and further in view of Clark as applied to claim 7 and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 3,224,900 to Creamer ("Creamer").

It is respectfully submitted that claims 1-9 are allowable over Emmett in view of Guarnaccia alone and in view of any combination of Saturday Night Live Episode, Pelizzola, Nissen, Clark and Creamer for at least the following reasons.

Emmett shows in FIGs. 7 and 8 a razor blade (302) having a cutting edge (306) at the front of planar edge portion (310) and a planar major portion (314) that is bent relative to the planar edge portion (310) (see, Col. 5, lines 45-51). Emmett discloses in Col. 6, lines 29-31, that the "configurations of the blades shown in the illustrative embodiments above are easily obtained by bending conventionally formed blades as some step in their manufacturing process." But Emmett does not disclose any general or specific details regarding a bending process.

Guarnaccia discloses in Col. 3, lines 22-45, a one-piece single edge razor blade 10 that is integrally formed from sheet

steel in a process that includes (i) bending, stamping, etc., the sheet steel into a strip of blade blanks, (ii) heat treating the strip of blade blanks to a desired hardness, (iii) grinding the hardened strip of blade blanks to provide a cutting edge, and (iv) breaking the strip into individual blades. Guarnaccia further discloses that the blade 10 may be heat treated to have a differential composition with varying hardening characteristics.

In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that with regard to claim 1, the combination of Emmett and Guarnaccia does not disclose or suggest a razor blade that includes, amongst other patentable elements, comprises (illustrative emphasis provided) "[an] edge portion being bent relative to [a] further portion in a bending zone ... wherein at least the edge portion has a material structure hardened by a first heat treatment and wherein the bending zone has a locally re-heated structure formed subsequent to the first heat treatment" as recited in claim 1.

Indeed, the Office Action acknowledges that Emmett does not disclose wherein the bending zone has a locally re-heated structure. To cure the deficiencies of Emmett, the Office Action relies on Guarnaccia as disclosing (in Col. 3, lines 25-40) a razor blade (10) that undergoes a heat treatment process to obtain a

harder blade. It is respectfully asserted that reliance on Guarnaccia in this regard is misplaced for several reasons.

First of all, Guarnaccia's disclosure of a heat treatment process to obtain a harder blade is not the same or remotely similar to the claim feature of a bending zone having a locally re-heated structure. Moreover, there is nothing in Guarnaccia that discloses or remotely suggests a bending zone that has a locally re-heated structure, much less a bending zone that has a locally re-heated structure formed subsequent to the first heat treatment, as recited in claim 1. In fact, Guarnaccia merely discloses that bending is performed on raw sheet material prior to performing a global (not local) heat treatment process for hardening the entire strip of blade blanks. Based on the foregoing, the Applicant respectfully submits that independent claim 1 is patentable over Emmett in view of Guarnaccia and notice to this effect is earnestly solicited.

Moreover, it is respectfully submitted that the method of claim 7 is not anticipated or made obvious by the teachings of Nissen in view of Emmett in further view of Clark. For example, Nissen in view of Emmett in further view of Clark does not disclose or suggest, a method of manufacturing a razor blade from a razor

blade blank, which includes, amongst other patentable elements, (illustrative emphasis provided) "reheating, after hardening of the razor blade blank, a portion of the razor blade blank locally to bend the edge portion of the razor blade blank relative to the further portion of the razor blade blank" as recited in claim 7.

In the Office Action, it is acknowledged that Nissen does not disclose a method of manufacturing a razor blade that includes "reheating" as claimed. Moreover, as noted above, Emmett does not disclose or remotely suggest a bending process, much less a bending process that comprises a "reheating" step as recited in claim 7. In fact, the Office Action acknowledges that Nissen modified by Emmett does not disclose "reheating" after hardening, as claimed.

To cure the deficiencies of Nissen and Emmett in this regard, Clark is relied on as disclosing in lines 94-99 "locally reheating an already hardened blade strip in order to soften the material to make it more flexible instead of brittle." It is respectfully submitted that reliance on Clark is misplaced.

Clark discloses a process of making flat blades having perforated center regions that are softer and more flexible than other portion of the blade (see, lines 93-99). In particular, Clark discloses that an "annealing process" is applied (after

hardening) to the material between perforations (11) in a central strip region between lines (16) of a strip of steel (10) so that the annealed material is made flexible (see FIG. 3, 4, and page 1, line 100 through page 2, line 6).

In view of the above, Clark clearly does not disclose reheating, after hardening of the razor blade blank, a portion of the razor blade blank locally to bend the edge portion of the razor blade blank relative to the further portion of the razor blade, as recited in claim 7. Indeed, in stark contrast, although Clark generally discloses heating (annealing) a center portion of the blade, the heating is performed to form a flat razor blade having a flexible center portion, and not for bending. Therefore, for at least at least the above reasons, it is respectfully submitted that claim 7 is not anticipated or made obvious by the teachings of Nissen in view of Emmett in further view of Clark.

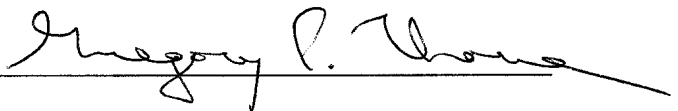
Based on the foregoing, the Applicant respectfully submits that independent claims 1 and 7 are patentable and notice to this effect is earnestly solicited. Claims 2-6 and 8-9 respectively depend from one of claims 1 and 7 and accordingly are allowable for at least this reason as well as for the separately patentable elements contained in each of the claims. Accordingly, separate

consideration of each of the dependent claims is respectfully requested.

In addition, Applicant denies any statement, position or averment of the Examiner that is not specifically addressed by the foregoing argument and response. Any rejections and/or points of argument not addressed would appear to be moot in view of the presented remarks. However, the Applicant reserves the right to submit further arguments in support of the above stated position, should that become necessary. No arguments are waived and none of the Examiner's statements are conceded.

Applicant has made a diligent and sincere effort to place this application in condition for immediate allowance and notice to this effect is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

By 

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